

destruction, to assure them and cry unto them whether they list to hear or not." If, in Knox's opinion, a ruler acts against God's commandments and the commonweal, he or she shall be told so in the bluntest fashion. No conventional feeling of reverence will stay the shaft ready to dart from his tongue or his pen, as Mary of Scotland, as well as Mary of England, experienced on more than one occasion. The "Blast" is a direct challenge to throw off the authority of a ruler who is not only a woman but a bloody tyrant. "The nobility and estates of the realm" ought, he roundly asserts, without further delay to depose her.

In spite of the resentment of Calvin, who sharply rebuked the injudicious zeal which helped to estrange Elizabeth from the Genevan as well as the Scottish reformer, Knox intended to follow up the "First Blast" with two others. The death of Mary and the anger of Elizabeth stayed his pen, but he gave to the world an outline of his further cogitations in the form of four propositions. In these the influence of his old teacher, John Major, is unmistakable. Not birth, not mere blood, he asserts, make a lawful king. Kings rule by the election, the consent, of the people. No manifest idolater or transgressor of God's law ought to exercise the government. No oath of allegiance can bind a people to obey and maintain a tyrant, and if the people have hastily entrusted the government to any one unworthy of it they may most justly depose and punish him. He resembles Major, too, in the depreciatory tone in which, though less offensively, he refers to the people. The people at large is to him usually "the ignorant multitude," "the rascal multitude." He evidently had not risen to the conception of the political rights of the mass, for the people, in a political sense, means merely the Estates, and the Estates were far from being equivalent to the people of Scotland. He would probably, in fact, have been forward to denounce any attempt by the mass to revolt against class privilege and power in its own interests, and apart from the theological revolution of which he was the protagonist. In preaching resistance he is the ecclesiastical rather than the political or social reformer, though there was as clamant need, according to Lyndsay and the author of "The Complaynt," for political and social as for religious reform. John Knox, we repeat, was